



## Early College High Schools

### OVERVIEW

Early College High Schools (ECHS) blend high school and college curricula into a simultaneous educational experience that gives traditionally under-served students the chance to earn up to two years (60 hours) of college credit while they finish high school. The facilities, usually located on college or university campuses, make higher education more accessible and also help students become more comfortable in a higher education environment.

### CAMPUSES

Texas is home to 49 Early College High Schools and 5 blended Early College High School/Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (T-STEM) Academies serving more than 10,000 students across the state.



### ECHS SPOTLIGHT

- In 2008-2009, more than 1,100 ECHS students each earned an average 16 credit hours.
- These students saved approximately \$4,000 each or \$4.5 million in college tuition.
- In May 2010, 900 students graduated from 11 ECHS - the first cohort of ECHS students in Texas.
- Of these 900 students, 308 graduates earned an Associate's degree along with their high school diploma.

### OBJECTIVES

- Create a means to higher education for first-generation college-going students
- Provide dual credit at no cost to students
- Course work mimics a college setting, plus students receive intense academic counseling to help them develop skills essential for postsecondary success
- Increase college attendance and success rates for all students
- Strengthen the connections between middle schools, high schools, and higher education to promote a statewide college-going culture

### KEY ELEMENTS

- Early College High Schools' class sizes are limited to provide highly personalized attention and to encourage the development of lasting peer and teacher relationships.
- Early College High School campuses foster a college-going culture where the majority of students are traditionally under-represented or low-performing.
- A blended high school and college curriculum exposes students to all education disciplines with a special emphasis on science, math, engineering, healthcare, biotechnology and technology.
- Professional development training for ECHS teachers focuses on creating an academic culture that enables struggling learners to achieve success in college courses on the accelerated timeline of an early college high school.